

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 CU-02

AID-05 NIC-01 /067 W

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P R 171435Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1918

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 2222

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, ASEC, KE

SUBJECT: FUNERAL OF J.M. KARIUKI

REF: NAIROBI 2187 (NOTAL)

1. MARCH 16 FUNERAL OF J.M. KARIUKI, POPULAR KIKUYU MP AND CRITIC OF GOK WHOSE BRUTAL MURDER EARLIER THIS MONTH HAS SEVERLY DAMAGED CREDIBILITY AND AUTHORITY OF KENYATTA GOVERNMENT, PASSED WITHOUT INCIDENT. APPROXIMATELY 5,000 MOURNERS, PREDOMINANTLY NYERI KIKIYU BUT INCLUDING LARGE STUDENT DELEGATION AND SOME MP'S FROM OTHER TRIBES, GATHERED AT KARIUKI'S FARM NEAR GILGIL, 70 MILES NORTHWEST OF NAIROBI, TO FILE PAST BATTERED CORPSE IN OPEN CASKET AND TO LISTEN TO EULOGIES THAT WERE OPENLY CRITICAL OF KENYATTA AND GOK.

2. CROWD SMALLER THAN EXPECTED, PARTLY BECAUSE FUNERAL SITE ISOLATED, AND PARTLY BECAUSE PEOPLE CONCERNED BY POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE. ONLY MINISTER PRESENT WAS MIN. FINANCE AND PLANNING KIBAKI, WHO
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MADE IT CLEAR HE THERE ON PERSONAL BASIS AS FRIEND

OF FAMILY. BECAUSE NO CABINET MEMBER APPARENTLY WILLING TO ATTEND AS OFFICIAL GOK REP, TASK FELL TO PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER FOR CENTRAL PROVINCE NYACHAE, WHO WAS SHOUTED DOWN WHEN HE BEGAN BY READING MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT. STUDENT REP, IN HIS SPEECH, CALLED FOR RESIGNATION OF GOVERNMENT. LOCAL PRESS, HERETOFORE CHARY OF REPORTING CRITICISM OF KENYATTA, HAS HAD REMARKABLY FULL AND ACCURATE COVERAGE NOT ONLY OF CRITICAL FUNERAL SPEECHES BUT ALSO OF EQUALLY CRITICAL PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE THE PREVIOUS WEEK.

3. COMMENT: WITH FUNERAL PAST, ACTION WILL SHIFT AGAIN TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WHERE SELECT COMMITTEE WILL BEGIN ITS INVESTIGATION OF MURDER THIS WEEK. PRESIDENT AND CLOSE KIAMBU KIKUYU ADVISERS MAINTAINING LOW PROFILE IN EFFORT TO RIDE OUT PRESENT STORM, BUT INVESTIGATION, IF IT BEGINS TO DIG TOO DEEPLY, MAY CAUSE THEM TO PROROGUE (ADJOURN) PARLIAMENT AGAIN, A MOVE THAT WOULD FURTHER ERODE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE. IF, CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS, IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT FIGURES DO APPEAR BEFORE COMMITTEE, THEIR APPEARANCE WILL SUGGEST STRAINED LOYALTIES AND GROWING ISOLATION OF PRESIDENT AND KIAMBU CLIQUE WITHIN GOK.
MARSHALL

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